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## News Release

### **VA Medical Center Expands Homeless Program with New Facility**

#### ***VCRRC is 'one stop shop' for Detroit-area homeless Veterans***

*(May 3, 2012, Detroit)* With an eye on expansion and innovation, the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center in Detroit recently opened the doors of the Veterans Community Resource & Referral Center (VCRRC). The VCRRC is co-located inside of Piquette Square in Detroit.

"We are thrilled to be part of this new initiative," said Beth Baker, Chief of the new VCRRC. "We are one of just 16 in the nation and the second in the United States to open its doors. The services we offer to Detroit-area Veterans are very specialized and quite unique."

The VCRRC will be open 7 days a week, 12 hours a day, and will offer various services such as case management, substance abuse treatment, community referrals, housing placement, triage, transportation, showers, laundry facilities, a computer lab, clothing and ready-to-eat meals.

"This is a place where a homeless Veteran can walk through the door, seeking help, he or she can get a hot meal, a hot shower, speak to a therapist and begin the process of seeking permanent housing and medical care," said Baker. "This is not a shelter. It's a much more comprehensive approach to care, rehabilitation and rebuilding for some of our most vulnerable Veterans."

VCRRC is a program that grew out of a 2009 pledge made by President Obama and VA Secretary Eric Shinseki to end homelessness among the nation's Veterans within 5-years. According to a count on a January night in 2011, there were 67,495 homeless Veterans in the U.S. And, an estimated 144,842 Veterans spent at least one night in an emergency shelter or transitional housing program in a recent year. Here in Detroit, while hard to confirm accurate numbers, according to HAND, the Homeless Action

Network of Detroit, 3,100 people will have no place to call home in Detroit, Highland Park and Hamtramck, tonight. Of those 3,100 people, more than 400 are Veterans.

“Our ultimate goal is to get these Veterans off the streets and ease them back into a safe environment,” said Baker.

A ribbon cutting and grand opening for the VCRRC will be held on **May 3, 2012, 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.** at the facility. Tours will be offered, along with short presentations by VA officials. For more information on the VA’s Homeless Veterans initiative, visit [www.va.gov/homeless](http://www.va.gov/homeless), or call the Detroit VA Medical Center at 313-576-1000.

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*About the Detroit VA Medical Center: Since 1939, the Detroit VAMC has been improving the health of the men and women who have so proudly served our nation. In 1996, the medical center moved from Allen Park, Michigan to the current location in Detroit. The John D. Dingell VAMC located in Detroit, Michigan is one of the newest VA facilities in the country. We consider it our privilege to serve the health care needs of our Veterans. Services are available to more than 330,000 Veterans living in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, and St. Clair counties. This population represents approximately forty-four percent of the Veteran population in the lower peninsula of Michigan. For more information, visit <http://www.detroit.va.gov>.*